A bill to be entitled An act relating to water management districts; reenacting s. 373.069, F.S., relating to the creation of the water management districts, pursuant to the provisions of the Florida Government Accountability Act; amending s. 373.0693, F.S.; limiting the period of time a basin board member may serve after the end of a term; reducing the number of members on the Manasota Basin Board; eliminating the Oklawaha River Basin Advisory Council; removing ex officio designation of basin board chairs; amending s. 373.073, F.S.; providing for appointment of members commencing on a specified date; amending s. 373.079, F.S.; requiring a water management district's governing board to delegate to the executive director its authority to approve certain permits or grant variances or waivers of permitting requirements; authorizing water management district governing boards, basin boards, committees, and advisory boards to conduct meetings by means of communications media technology; amending s. 373.083, F.S.; requiring water management district governing boards to delegate to the water management district's executive director authority to approve certain permits or grant variances or waivers of permitting requirements; amending s. 373.118, F.S.; removing provisions authorizing water management district governing boards to delegate authority to issue general permits to the executive director; amending s. 373.323, F.S.; revising application requirements for water well contractor licensure;

Page 1 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

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requiring applicants to provide specified documentation; amending s. 373.236, F.S.; authorizing water management districts to issue 50-year consumptive use permits to specified entities for certain alternative water supply development projects; providing for compliance reporting and review, modification, and revocation relating to such permits; amending s. 373.536, F.S.; authorizing substantive legislative committee chairs to provide input on proposed water management district budgets; amending s. 373.584, F.S.; providing a limitation on certain bonding for water management districts; authorizing the Joint Legislative Budget Commission to approve bonding exceeding such limitation; exempting certain outstanding bonds from such limitation and its calculation; amending s. 373.59, F.S.; expanding water management district lands eligible to receive payment in lieu of taxes; revising the method used to determine eligibility for such payment; amending s. 373.5905, F.S.; providing conditions for reinstatement of payments in lieu of taxes and their duration; repealing s. 373.465, F.S., to eliminate the Lake Panasoffkee Restoration Council; repealing s. 373.466, F.S., to eliminate the Lake Panasoffkee restoration program; providing an effective date. Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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Section 373.069, Florida Statutes, is reenacted.

Page 2 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

Section 2. Subsections (3), (6), and (7) and paragraph (a) of subsection (8) of section 373.0693, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

373.0693 Basins; basin boards.--

- (3) Each member of the various basin boards shall serve for a period of 3 years or until a successor is appointed, but not more than 180 days after the end of the term, except that the board membership of each new basin shall be divided into three groups as equally as possible, with members in such groups to be appointed for 1, 2, and 3 years, respectively. Each basin board shall choose a vice chair and a secretary to serve for a period of 1 year. The term of office of a basin board member shall be construed to commence on March 2 preceding the date of appointment and to terminate March 1 of the year of the end of a term or may continue until a successor is appointed, but not more than 180 days after the end of the expired term.
- (6) (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other general or special law to the contrary, a member of the governing board of the district residing in the basin or, if no member resides in the basin, a member of the governing board designated by the chair of the governing board shall be the ex officio chair of the basin board. The ex officio chair shall preside at all meetings of the basin board, except that the vice chair may preside in his or her absence. The ex officio chair shall have no official vote, except in case of a tie vote being cast by the members, but shall be the liaison officer of the district in all affairs in the basin and shall be kept informed of all such affairs.

- Management District shall meet regularly as determined by a majority vote of the basin board members. Subject to notice requirements of chapter 120, special meetings, both emergency and nonemergency, may be called either by the ex officio chair or the elected vice chair of the basin board or upon request of two basin board members. The district staff shall include on the agenda of any basin board meeting any item for discussion or action requested by a member of that basin board. The district staff shall notify any basin board, as well as their respective counties, of any vacancies occurring in the district governing board or their respective basin boards.
- At 11:59 p.m. on December 31, 1976, the Manasota Watershed Basin of the Ridge and Lower Gulf Coast Water Management District, which is annexed to the Southwest Florida Water Management District by change of its boundaries pursuant to chapter 76-243, Laws of Florida, shall be formed into a subdistrict or basin of the Southwest Florida Water Management District, subject to the same provisions as the other basins in such district. Such subdistrict shall be designated initially as the Manasota Basin. The members of the governing board of the Manasota Watershed Basin of the Ridge and Lower Gulf Coast Water Management District shall become members of the governing board of the Manasota Basin of the Southwest Florida Water Management District. Notwithstanding other provisions in this section, beginning on July 1, 2001, the membership of the Manasota Basin Board shall be comprised of two three members from Manatee County and two three members from Sarasota County. Matters

Page 4 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

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relating to tie votes shall be resolved pursuant to subsection (6) by the ex officio chair designated by the governing board to vote in case of a tie vote.

(8) (a) At 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 1988, the area transferred from the Southwest Florida Water Management District to the St. Johns River Water Management District by change of boundaries pursuant to chapter 76-243, Laws of Florida, shall cease to be a subdistrict or basin of the St. Johns River Water Management District known as the Oklawaha River Basin and said Oklawaha River Basin shall cease to exist. However, any recognition of an Oklawaha River Basin or an Oklawaha River Hydrologic Basin for regulatory purposes shall be unaffected. The area formerly known as the Oklawaha River Basin shall continue to be part of the St. Johns River Water Management District. There shall be established by the governing board of the St. Johns River Water Management District the Oklawaha River Basin Advisory Council to receive public input and advise the St. Johns River Water Management District's governing board on water management issues affecting the Oklawaha River Basin. The Oklawaha River Basin Advisory Council shall be appointed by action of the St. Johns River Water Management District's governing board and shall include one representative from each county which is wholly or partly included in the Oklawaha River Basin. The St. Johns River Water Management District's governing board member currently serving pursuant to s. 373.073(2)(c)3. shall serve as chair of the Oklawaha River Basin Advisory Council. Members of the Oklawaha River Basin Advisory Council receive no compensation for their services but are

Page 5 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

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entitled to be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061.

Section 3. Subsection (1) of s. 373.073, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.073 Governing board.--

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- (1) (a) The governing board of each water management district shall be composed of 9 members who shall reside within the district, except that the Southwest Florida Water Management District shall be composed of 13 members who shall reside within the district. Members of the governing boards shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate at the next regular session of the Legislature, and the refusal or failure of the Senate to confirm an appointment creates a vacancy in the office to which the appointment was made. The term of office for a governing board member is 4 years and commences on March 2 of the year in which the appointment is made and terminates on March 1 of the fourth calendar year of the term or may continue until a successor is appointed, but not more than 180 days. Terms of office of governing board members shall be staggered to help maintain consistency and continuity in the exercise of governing board duties and to minimize disruption in district operations.
- (b) Commencing January 1, $\underline{2011}$ $\underline{1999}$, the Governor shall appoint the following number of governing board members in each year of the Governor's 4-year term of office:
- 1. In the first year of the Governor's term of office, the Governor shall appoint four members to the governing board of

the Southwest Florida Water Management District and appoint three members to the governing board of each other district.

- 2. In the second year of the Governor's term of office, the Governor shall appoint three members to the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and two members to the governing board of each other district.
- 3. In the third year of the Governor's term of office, the Governor shall appoint three members to the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and two members to the governing board of each other district.
- 4. In the fourth year of the Governor's term of office, the Governor shall appoint three members to the governing board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and two members to the governing board of each other district.

For any governing board vacancy that occurs before the date scheduled for the office to be filled under this paragraph, the Governor shall appoint a person meeting residency requirements of subsection (2) for a term that will expire on the date scheduled for the term of that office to terminate under this subsection. In addition to the residency requirements for the governing boards as provided by subsection (2), the Governor shall consider appointing governing board members to represent an equitable cross-section of regional interests and technical expertise.

Section 4. Subsections (4) and (7) of section 373.079, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

Page 7 of 18

373.079 Members of governing board; oath of office; staff.--

- The governing board of the district is authorized (4)(a) to employ an executive director, ombudsman, and such engineers, other professional persons, and other personnel and assistants as it deems necessary and under such terms and conditions as it may determine and to terminate such employment. The appointment of an executive director by the governing board is subject to approval by the Governor and must be initially confirmed by the Florida Senate. The governing board may delegate all or part of its authority under this paragraph to the executive director. However, the governing board shall delegate to the executive director all of its authority to take final action on permit applications under part II or part IV or petitions for variances or waivers of permitting requirements under part II or part IV, except for denials of such actions as provided in s. 373.083(5). The executive director must be confirmed by the Senate upon employment and must be confirmed or reconfirmed by the Senate during the second regular session of the Legislature following a gubernatorial election.
- (b)1. The governing board of each water management district shall employ an inspector general, who shall report directly to the board. However, the governing boards of the Suwannee River Water Management District and the Northwest Florida Water Management District may jointly employ an inspector general, or provide for inspector general services by interagency agreement with a state agency or water management district inspector general.

Page 8 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

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- 2. An inspector general must have the qualifications prescribed and perform the applicable duties of state agency inspectors general as provided in s. 20.055.
- (7) The governing board shall meet at least once a month and upon call of the chair. The governing board, a basin board, a committee, or an advisory board may conduct meetings by means of communications media technology in accordance with rules adopted pursuant to s. 120.54.
- Section 5. Subsection (5) of section 373.083, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 373.083 General powers and duties of the governing board.--In addition to other powers and duties allowed it by law, the governing board is authorized to:
- vested in the governing board through a member or members thereof, the executive director, or other district staff as designated by the governing board. The governing board may establish the scope and terms of any delegation. The However, if the governing board shall delegate to the executive director all of its delegates the authority to take final action on permit applications under part II or part IV, or petitions for variances or waivers of permitting requirements under part II or part IV. However, the governing board shall provide a process for referring any denial of such application or petition to the governing board to take final action. Such process shall expressly prohibit any member of a governing board from intervening in any manner during the review of an application prior to such application being referred to the governing board

Page 9 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

for final action. The authority in this subsection is supplemental to any other provision of this chapter granting authority to the governing board to delegate specific powers, duties, or functions.

Section 6. Present subsection (4) of section 373.118, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (5) of that section is renumbered as subsection (4), to read:

373.118 General permits; delegation. --

(4) To provide for greater efficiency, the governing board may delegate by rule its powers and duties pertaining to general permits to the executive director. The executive director may execute such delegated authority through designated staff.

However, when delegating the authority to take final action on permit applications under part II or part IV or petitions for variances or waivers of permitting requirements under part II or part IV, the governing board shall provide a process for referring any denial of such application or petition to the governing board to take such final action.

Section 7. Subsection (3) of section 373.323, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

373.323 Licensure of water well contractors; application, qualifications, and examinations; equipment identification.--

- (3) An applicant who meets the following requirements shall be entitled to take the <u>water well contractor</u> licensure examination to practice water well contracting:
 - (a) Is at least 18 years of age.
- (b) Has at least 2 years of experience in constructing, repairing, or abandoning water wells. Satisfactory proof of such

Page 10 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

experience	shall	be	demonstrated	bv	providina:
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- 1. Evidence of the length of time the applicant has been engaged in the business of the construction, repair, or abandonment of water wells as a major activity, as attested to by a letter from three of the following persons:
 - a. A water well contractor.
 - b. A water well driller.

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- c. A water well parts and equipment vendor.
- d. A water well inspectors employed by a governmental agency.
- 2. A list of at least 10 water wells that the applicant has constructed, repaired, or abandoned within the preceding 5 years. Of these wells, at least seven must have been constructed, as defined in s. 373.303(2), by the applicant. The list shall also include:
- a. The name and address of the owner or owners of each well.
- b. The location, primary use, and approximate depth and diameter of each well that the applicant has constructed, repaired, or abandoned.
- <u>c.</u> The approximate date the construction, repair, or abandonment of each well was completed.
- (c) Has completed the application form and remitted a nonrefundable application fee.
- Section 8. Subsection (6) is added to section 373.236, 304 Florida Statutes, to read:
- 305 373.236 Duration of permits; compliance reports.--

Page 11 of 18

(6) (a) The Legislature finds that the need for alternative water supply development projects to meet anticipated public water supply demands of the state is so important that it is essential to encourage participation in and contribution to these projects by private-rural-land owners who characteristically have relatively modest near-term water demands but substantially increasing demands after the 20-year planning period in s. 373.0361. Therefore, where such landowners make extraordinary contributions of lands or construction funding to enable the expeditious implementation of such projects, water management districts and the department may grant permits for such projects for a period of up to 50 years to municipalities, counties, special districts, regional water supply authorities, multijurisdictional water supply entities, and publicly or privately owned utilities, with the exception of any of the foregoing created for or by a private landowner after April 1, 2008, which have entered into an agreement with the private landowner for the purpose of more efficiently pursuing alternative public water supply development projects identified in a district's regional water supply plan and of meeting water demands of both the applicant and the landowner.

(b) A permit under paragraph (a) may be granted only for that period for which there is sufficient data to provide reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance will be met. Such a permit shall require a compliance report by the permittee every 5 years during the term of the permit. The report shall contain sufficient data to maintain reasonable assurance that the conditions for permit issuance applicable at

Page 12 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

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the time of district review of the compliance report are met.
After review of this report, the governing board or the
department may modify the permit to ensure that the use meets
the conditions for issuance. This subsection does not limit the
existing authority of the department or the governing board to
modify or revoke a consumptive use permit.

- Section 9. Paragraph (e) of subsection (5) of section 373.536, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
 - 373.536 District budget and hearing thereon. --
- (5) TENTATIVE BUDGET CONTENTS AND SUBMISSION; REVIEW AND APPROVAL.--
- (e) By September 5 of the year in which the budget is submitted, the House and Senate appropriations and appropriate substantive committee chairs may transmit to each district comments and objections to the proposed budgets. Each district governing board shall include a response to such comments and objections in the record of the governing board meeting where final adoption of the budget takes place, and the record of this meeting shall be transmitted to the Executive Office of the Governor, the department, and the chairs of the House and Senate appropriations committees.
- Section 10. Subsection (5) is added to section 373.584, Florida Statutes, to read.
 - 373.584 Revenue bonds.--
- (5) (a) The total annual debt service for bonds issued pursuant to this section and s. 373.563 may not exceed 20 percent of the annual ad valorem tax revenues of the water

Page 13 of 18

management district, unless approved by the Joint Legislative Budget Commission.

- (b) The Joint Legislative Budget Commission is authorized to review the financial soundness of a water management district and determine whether bonds may be issued by a water management district in excess of the limitation provided in paragraph (a).
- (c) A water management district may not take any action regarding the issuance of bonds in excess of the limitation of paragraph (a) without prior approval of the Joint Legislative Budget Commission pursuant to joint rules of the House of Representative and the Senate.
- (d) Bonds issued and outstanding before January 1, 2009, in excess of paragraph (a) are exempt from this subsection and shall not be included in the calculation of the limitation of paragraph (a).
- (e) This subsection does not affect the validity or enforceability of outstanding revenue bonds.
- Section 11. Subsection (10) of section 373.59, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
 - 373.59 Water Management Lands Trust Fund. --
- (10) (a) Beginning July 1, 1999, not more than one-fourth of the funds provided for in subsections (1) and (8) in any year shall be reserved annually by a governing board, during the development of its annual operating budget, for payments in lieu of taxes for all actual tax losses incurred as a result of all governing board acquisitions for water management district purposes districts pursuant to ss. 259.101, 259.105, 373.470, and this section during any year. Reserved funds not used for

Page 14 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

payments in lieu of taxes in any year shall revert to the Water Management Lands Trust Fund to be used in accordance with the provisions of this section.

- (b) Payment in lieu of taxes shall be available:
- 1. To all counties that have a population of 150,000 or fewer. Population levels shall be determined pursuant to s.

 186.901 11.031. The population estimates published April 1 and used in the revenue-sharing formula pursuant to s. 186.901 shall be used to determine eligibility under this subsection and shall apply to payments made for the subsequent fiscal year.
- 2. To all <u>municipalities</u> local governments located in eligible counties and whose lands are bought and taken off the tax rolls.

For properties acquired after January 1, 2000, in the event that such properties otherwise eligible for payment in lieu of taxes under this subsection are leased or reserved and remain subject to ad valorem taxes, payments in lieu of taxes shall commence or recommence upon the expiration or termination of the lease or reservation, but in no event shall there be more than a total of 10 annual payments in lieu of taxes for each tax loss. If the lease is terminated for only a portion of the lands at any time, the 10 annual payments shall be made for that portion only commencing the year after such termination, without limiting the requirement that 10 annual payments shall be made on the remaining portion or portions of the land as the lease on each expires. For the purposes of this subsection, "local government" includes municipalities, the county school board, mosquito

Page 15 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

control districts, and any other local government entity which levies ad valorem taxes.

- (c) If sufficient funds are unavailable in any year to make full payments to all qualifying counties and <u>municipalities</u> local governments, such counties and <u>municipalities</u> local governments—shall receive a pro rata share of the moneys available.
- (d) The payment amount shall be based on the average amount of actual taxes paid on the property for the 3 years preceding acquisition. Applications for payment in lieu of taxes shall be made no later than January 31 of the year following acquisition. No payment in lieu of taxes shall be made for properties which were exempt from ad valorem taxation for the year immediately preceding acquisition.
- (e) If property that was subject to ad valorem taxation was acquired by a tax-exempt entity for ultimate conveyance to the state under this chapter, payment in lieu of taxes shall be made for such property based upon the average amount of taxes paid on the property for the 3 years prior to its being removed from the tax rolls. The water management districts shall certify to the Department of Revenue those properties that may be eligible under this provision. Once eligibility has been established, that governmental entity shall receive annual payments for each tax loss until the qualifying governmental entity exceeds the population threshold pursuant to s. 259.032(12)(b).
- (f) Payment in lieu of taxes pursuant to this subsection shall be made annually to qualifying counties and municipalities

Page 16 of 18

PCB GAAC 09-03b.doc

local governments after certification by the Department of Revenue that the amounts applied for are reasonably appropriate, based on the amount of actual taxes paid on the eligible property, and after the water management districts have provided supporting documents to the Chief Financial Officer and have requested that payment be made in accordance with the requirements of this section. With the assistance of the county or municipality local government requesting payment in lieu of taxes, the water management district that acquired the land is responsible for preparing and submitting application requests for payment to the Department of Revenue for certification.

(g) If a water management district conveys to a county or <u>municipality local government</u> title to any land owned by the district, any payments in lieu of taxes on the land made to the county or <u>municipality local government</u> shall be discontinued as of the date of the conveyance.

Section 12. Section 373.5905, Florida Statutes, is amended to read

373.5905 Reinstatement Reinstitution of payments in lieu of taxes; duration.--If a water management district has made a payment in lieu of taxes to a governmental entity and subsequently suspended such payment, beginning July 1, 2009, the water management district shall reinstate reinstitute appropriate payments and continue the payments for as long as the county population remains below the population threshold pursuant to s. 373.59(10)(b). This section does not authorize or provide for payments in arrears in consecutive years until the

governmental entity has received a total of 10 payments for each
tax loss.

Section 13. Sections 373.465 and 373.466, Florida

Statutes, are repealed.

Section 14. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.

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Page 18 of 18

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